

June 17, 2022

Legislative Press Bureau at (401) 528-1743

THIS WEEK AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

STATE HOUSE — Here are the highlights from news and events that took place in the General Assembly this week. For more information on any of these items visit <http://www.rilegislature.gov/pressrelease>



- **Assembly approves gun safety measures**

The General Assembly approved bills to ban large-capacity gun magazines ([2022-H 6614A](#), [2022-S 2653](#)), limit sales of guns and ammunition to adults over 21 years old ([2022-H 7457aa](#), [2022-S 2637A](#)), and penalize the open carrying of loaded rifles and shotguns in public ([2022-S 2825](#), [2022-H 7358A](#)). The large-capacity magazines bill is sponsored by Senate Judiciary Chairwoman Cynthia A. Coyne (D-Dist. 32, Barrington, Bristol, East Providence) and Rep. Justine Caldwell (D-Dist. 30, East Greenwich, West Greenwich), the purchase age bill by Senate Majority Whip Maryellen Goodwin (D-Dist. 1, Providence) and Rep. Teresa Tanzi (D-Dist. 34, South Kingstown, Narragansett), and the open carry bill by Senate Majority Leader Michael J. McCaffrey (D-Dist. 29, Warwick) and Rep. Leonela “Leo” Felix (D-Dist. 61, Pawtucket). The bills now go to the governor.

[Click here to see large-capacity magazines release.](#)

[Click here to see purchase age news release.](#)

[Click here to see open carry news release.](#)

- **House approves 2023 state budget bill**

The House approved a \$13.6 billion state budget for the 2023 fiscal year that provides targeted taxpayer relief and directs spending of the remainder of the state’s American Rescue Act Plan (ARPA) funds to strengthening existing commitments. The bill includes raises for many health and service providers, eliminates the automobile excise tax a year earlier than scheduled, provides economic relief for families with children, retirees, veterans and the disabled and businesses and invests ARPA funds in housing, infrastructure, the blue economy and more. The budget bill ([2022-H 7123Aaa](#)), sponsored by House Finance Committee Chairman Marvin L. Abney (D-

More...

Dist. 73, Newport, Middletown), now goes to the Senate, which is expected to take it up Wednesday.

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▪ **Unemployment benefits extension wins Assembly approval**

The General Assembly gave its approval to legislation to extend by one year changes to unemployment regulations to put Rhode Islanders back to work. The legislation, sponsored by Senate Majority Whip Maryellen Goodwin (D-Dist. 1, Providence) and House Small Business Committee Chairwoman Carol Hagan McEntee (D-Dist. 33, South Kingstown, Narragansett), extends the sunset on legislation enacted last year to increase the wages people can earn before having their benefits reduced, through June 30, 2023. The measure now heads to the governor's office.

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▪ **Assembly gives nod to bill extending speech therapy in schools**

The General Assembly approved legislation sponsored by Senate President Pro Tempore Hanna M. Gallo (D-Dist. 27, Cranston, West Warwick) and House Education Committee Chairman Joseph M. McNamara (D-Dist. 19, Warwick, Cranston) to allow speech therapy services to be provided in school to children who need them, regardless of age. The legislation ([2022-S 2570](#), [2022-H 7273](#)) now heads to the governor for consideration.

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▪ **Assembly OKs joint resolution to study Rhode Island's public education system**

The General Assembly approved a resolution ([2022-H 7784](#), [2022-S 2442](#)) introduced by Rep. Joseph M. McNamara (D-Dist. 19, Warwick, Cranston) and Sen. Louis P. DiPalma (D-Dist. 12, Middletown, Little Compton, Newport, Tiverton) that creates a commission to study, review, and make recommendations on how to most efficiently and effectively administer the governance of the pre-K through 16 public education system in Rhode Island.

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▪ **Legislature OKs bill allowing interstate compact for psychological services**

The General Assembly passed legislation ([2022-S 2605](#), [2022-H 7501](#)) introduced by Sen. Alana M. DiMario (D-Dist. 36, Narragansett, North Kingstown) and Rep. Joseph M. McNamara (D-Dist. 19, Warwick, Cranston) that would authorize the governor to enter into the Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact and would designate an office to administer it. The act would also create an interstate agreement that would allow limited telepsychological practice to be conducted across state lines among member states. The measure now moves to the governor's office.

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▪ **Assembly OKs bill preventing self-exclusion gamblers from collecting winnings**

The General Assembly passed legislation ([2022-H 7424](#), [2022-S 2496A](#)) sponsored by Rep. William W. O'Brien (D-Dist. 54, North Providence) and Sen. Frank A. Ciccone (D-Dist. 7, Providence, North Providence) that would provide procedures to prevent problem gamblers on the state's self-exclusion list from collecting their winnings at Rhode Island's two casinos.

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- **General Assembly passes legislation making it easier for food banks to fundraise**
The General Assembly passed legislation ([2022-H 7911A](#), [2022-S 2550A](#)) sponsored by Rep. Julie A. Casimiro (D-Dist. 31, North Kingstown, Exeter) and Sen. Bridget Valverde (D-Dist. 35, North Kingstown, East Greenwich, Narragansett, South Kingstown) that would exempt nonprofit and not-for-profit food banks from the registration requirements under the “solicitation by charitable organizations” statute. The act would not apply to the Rhode Island Community Food Bank.
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- **Senate OKs transport of mental health 911 responses to appropriate settings**
The Senate has approved legislation ([2022-S 2476A](#)) sponsored by Senate Health and Human Services Committee Chairman Joshua Miller (D-Dist. 28, Cranston, Providence) to authorize emergency medical services to divert transports resulting from non-emergency 911 calls about mental or behavioral health to appropriate alternative settings, and requiring commercial health insurers and Medicaid to reimburse for that transport. The bill would ensure access to more appropriate, effective treatment and help overcrowded emergency departments. The legislation now goes to the House of Representatives, where Rep. Rebecca Kislak (D-Dist. 4, Providence) is sponsoring a similar bill ([2022-H 8282](#)).
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- **Senate approves Leader McCaffrey’s bill to address lead pipes**
The Senate approved legislation ([2022-S 2765Aaa](#)) sponsored by Majority Leader Michael J. McCaffrey (D-Dist. 29, Warwick) that would create a lead water supply replacement program for both public and private service lines, with a requirement that all affected lines are replaced within 10 years. The measure now moves to the House, where similar legislation ([2022-H 8153](#)) has been introduced by Rep. David Morales (D-Dist. 7, Providence).
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